



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe



Understanding the role of ICT use in connectivity of minority communities in Wales



Arts & Humanities
Research Council

Connected Communities:
Scoping Studies and Research
Reviews

AHRC Connected Communities Programme

- ❑ ***Vision:*** To mobilise the potential for increasingly inter-connected communities to enhance self-reliance, regeneration, sustainability, health & well-being by better connecting research, stakeholders and communities.

- ❑ ***Underpinning cross-cutting themes:***
 - Understanding Changing Community Cultures and Patterns of Connectivity within and between Communities.
 - Connecting Research on Communities
 - Connecting Research with Communities and other Stakeholders, Stimulating Research Partnerships & Enhanced Harvesting of Research for the Benefit of Communities

AHRC Connected Communities Programme

Possible Approaches to Exploring Communities

Types of Community

- Lifecycle (e.g. children, adolescence, older people etc)
- Social, cultural economic group, ethnic origin, class, religion etc
- Spatial / temporal location, neighbourhood, rural/urban etc
- Method of connection e.g. Virtual Community

Cross-cutting Themes e.g.

- Participation & self reliance
- Regeneration
- Health & well-being
- Cohesion & diversity
- Community spaces & sustainable community environments



Method / Approach to study

- Theoretical / conceptual / historical / comparative
- Systems, models, complexity
- Case studies (initiatives, neighbourhoods, cities etc)
- Intervention / experimental / action
- Sustainability assessment
- Evaluation
- Participatory & ethnographic research
- Synthesis & Data Integration

Underpinning factors e.g. infrastructure, ecosystems services

Drivers of Change e.g. Economic (e.g public spending squeeze), Environmental, Population, Technological, Cultural Change, Globalisation, Political, etc

AHRC Connected Communities Funding

- ❑ *Projects funded* to conduct research reviews on the following topics

Conceptualisations and meanings of community

Changing nature of ‘connectivity’ within and between communities, including connectivity between communities and their broader environment and the impact of new communication technologies

Evolution of ideas about community self-reliance, resilience, social & community ‘capital’, empowerment and participation

Conflict within and between communities

Community perspectives and approaches to engaging communities in and with research

The project's contribution to AHRC Connected Communities

- ❑ A forward-looking research agenda: what research is needed to define minority communities and to examine the role of ICTs in connectivity within and between them.
- ❑ Identify specific minority communities in Wales that exemplify the problems associated with ICT non-use as obstacles to connectivity of minority communities.
- ❑ Offer an integrated multi-disciplinary approach to ICTs and connectivity of minority communities at the regional level, and respond to the cross-cutting themes of the Connected Communities Programme.
- ❑ Pave the way towards richer national research initiatives that include the collection of primary research data on the use of new technologies and community living.

Project Team

Dr. Panayiota Tsatsou, Swansea University

Prof. Gary Higgs, University of Glamorgan

Dr. Ian Stafford, Cardiff University

Dr. Richard Fry, University of Glamorgan

Dr. Robert Berry, University of Glamorgan

Project aim

A systematic review of research evidence to explore how ICTs and the 'new' and 'old' ways of using them are influencing connectivity within and among minority communities in Wales and the forms of community cultures and practices resulted.

Project objectives

- ❑ To gain an understanding of the impact of ICTs on changing cultures and patterns of connectivity within and between minority communities and the potential of multifaceted digital divides in constraining or shaping these forms of connectivity in Wales.
- ❑ To address key gaps in research, while providing conceptual & methodological insights which can lead to large-scale, community-oriented and methodologically innovative research.
- ❑ To make recommendations about how research can connect with communities and stakeholders to enhance research and inform policy.
- ❑ To provide the foundation for a systematic comparative analysis of government interventions on digital exclusion across the UK.

Project concepts

- ❑ ICTs: currently used as an umbrella term to embrace both fixed and mobile/portable as well as Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 technologies and services
- ❑ ‘Community’ to be elaborated further and compared/contrasted with other social formations (e.g. groups)
- ❑ Ethnic, disability and language (e.g. Welsh speaking) communities at the epicentre of our work
- ❑ ‘Minority’: to be defined and used carefully in our work

Project design & outputs

- ❑ ***Literature review:*** to map out the field and provide good conceptual and research grounds for the research review

- ❑ ***Data search and collection:*** a categorisation system to search and collect regional and national research on ICTs and connectivity of ethnic, disabled and language communities in Wales.

- ❑ ***Research database and data analysis***
 - a research database will become publicly available on the project website
 - a ‘data proforma’ will be designed consisting of variables to track the general characteristics of research and its results on the role of ICTs in connectivity of minority communities in Wales.
 - the research evidence will be systematically coded along the ‘data proforma’ variables and the coding results will be analysed through SPSS.

Collaborative/dissemination activities

- ❑ First Consultation Workshop, 30 May 2011 (data sharing)
- ❑ Second Consultation Workshop, June 2011 (launch of the literature review) .
- ❑ Third Consultation Workshop, September 2011 (research review results)
- ❑ Public Dissemination event, October 2011.
- ❑ Four one-day Community Engagement Seminars, November-December 2011

If you are interested in attending any of our events, please contact Dr. Ian Stafford at StaffordIM@cardiff.ac.uk

**For more information on the project,
please see
<http://www.wiserd.ac.uk/research/cc/>**

Thank you!